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CONSUMERS' GUIDE

JUNE 1939



CONFERENCE



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CONSUMER FRONT



FOOD BILL

CONSUMERS' GUIDE

JUNE 1939

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DIG OUT your dictionary and see if you can find out what "purchasing power" means. Chances are you won't find it defined there. Yet this phrase is used probably more often than any other these days when people get together to talk about what's wrong with America. Most people seem agreed that we haven't got enough of it. The women who came to talk with Secretary Wallace—see page 6—thought we needed more of it. Few people stop to define it.

Some people think more "purchasing power" means more money. Others think it means a larger pay check. Actually it means greater ability to buy goods and services—and that takes into account not only the money you have to spend but also the cost of goods and services that you spend it for.

Having a bigger purchasing power is more important than having a bigger income. You can't eat dollar bills, or make suits out of them, or live under them so that the rain doesn't hit you or the sun doesn't strike you. But you can eat and wear and live in things that dollars will buy. If your purchasing power goes up—that is, if your ability to buy the thing you want goes up—you are definitely ahead in the game.

When the Congress passed the Agricultural Adjustment Act it recognized the difference between having a bigger income and having a bigger purchasing power. In the A. A. Act, it said: We want farm families to have—not just a bigger income, not just higher prices—but a bigger purchasing power.

There are two ways to get a bigger purchasing power: One is to have your income step up faster than the cost of the things you buy; another is to know how to spend the money you have so that you get more for it.

AAA is hard at work trying to aid farmers in building up their purchasing power both ways. By helping farmers to plan their production and marketing, by helping them to conserve the source of their income, it is giving them a hand in increasing their money income. By telling farm families how to buy wisely and economically, as in the *Consumers' Guide*, it is giving them a hand in getting the greatest possible satisfaction from the spending of their income. Both services go hand in hand.

PUSHING AHEAD its experiment in better nutrition for relief families, the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation put the "stamp plan" into operation in Dayton, Ohio, on June 1. (For a description of this plan, see *Consumers' Guide* for April 15, 1939.)

This is the second city to be chosen as proving ground for the Government's new effort to move surplus foods from the farms, through regular distribution channels, and into the hands of people whose incomes are too small to purchase safe diets. The first city was Rochester, New York.

Two methods of distributing surplus food order stamps are being used in Dayton. One group of people—those at work on WPA projects, those receiving or eligible to receive public assistance such as old age pensions, aid to children, aid to the blind—will be offered the chance to get free blue surplus stamps if they buy orange-colored food order stamps with part of the public funds they receive. To get the blue stamps, they must buy at least one dollar's worth of orange-colored ones for each person in the family per week. For each dollar's worth of orange-colored stamps, they get free 50 cents' worth of blue stamps. Orange-colored stamps will buy anything—except liquors or tobacco or food eaten at the store—which is sold in the stores of cooperating merchants. Blue stamps will buy any of the surplus foods. Foods now on the surplus list include: butter, eggs, dry edible beans, dried prunes, oranges, fresh grapefruit, wheat flour, graham flour, and corn meal.

Second plan for distributing surplus food order stamps does not require the purchase of orange-colored stamps. People who were receiving grocery orders, as part of the direct aid their local government was giving before the stamp plan went into effect, may ask for blue stamps. With these, they can go to the cooperating grocery stores and buy any of the surplus foods.

Local and Federal Government experts, the trade, and nutritionists are watching carefully how these experiments work out, to determine whether they justify extending the

stamp plan throughout the country. Not until this new method of handling troublesome surpluses and relieving serious diet shortages has been proved effective and efficient in a handful of cities, will it be made a general program.

MEANTIME supplies of surplus foods are being moved out to relief families in other cities and towns by the old method of FSCC purchase and State welfare agency distribution. One method of distribution is to schools providing hot lunches for children. We described the school lunch program in our Jan. 30, 1939, issue. Since this article appeared, a number of readers have written us asking how they can get such a program operating in their communities. The answer is: Write or call on your State Relief Administrator, or ask your School Superintendent to do so. This Administrator will tell you how the school lunch plan works and what help he can give you.

EXTENSION WORKERS in South Dakota are making a dramatic demonstration of what a cooperative program for better nutrition can do when it is well planned and vigorously pushed.

First, they organized a State Nutrition Committee. Members of this Committee included the State Supervisor of Homemaking Education of the State Department of Education; the Associate State Director in charge of Home Economics of the Farm Security Administration; the State Director of Maternal and Child Health Work; the State Supervisor of Public Health Nursing; the State Demonstration Leader. Chairman of this Committee is the Extension Service Nutritionist.

Next, they organized County Nutrition Committees. On these Committees were County Superintendents of rural schools; Home Management Supervisors of Farm Security; all Homemaking teachers from local Boards of Education; the County Nurse; and the Home Demonstration Agents of the Extension Service.

To operate a hot school lunch program with contributions of surplus commodities a sponsor is always required. In South Dakota, the State Extension Service made itself sponsor. Sixty-eight counties received assistance with the hot lunch program in 1938.

Reports the State Extension Nutritionist: "The County Nurse of Union County says that in all schools where hot lunch was served there was a decided improvement in physical and mental condition, that more milk and dry skim milk are being used and a better variety of food is being served to the children.

LOW-INCOME farm families living in rehabilitation community projects have their own type of FSA health program. Most of these families are paying \$1.50 to \$2.50 a month out of their own incomes for complete medical care. In some cases the Government lends money until the families can meet the bill themselves. This is the health center of the Tygart Valley Homesteads community in West Virginia.

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Health Security for the Economically Insecure

How the Farm Security Administration helps low-income rural families to budget for adequate medical care

THE BARBER in the small southern town paused in his shaving.

"Y'know," he said, "it's a funny thing about Doc Brown. He came in for a haircut the other day and paid me in cash. First time in years."

"What's so funny about that?"

"Why, the Doc's been paying me in vegetables or fruit for a long time—a quart of beans for a shave, or a box of peaches for a haircut. That's how the farmers paid him, so that's how he paid his bills. But since they've started the new health plan around here, Doc Brown pays cash. I guess it's because he's getting cash from the farmers who go to him."

Building health security for Farmer Smith builds economic security for Doc Brown. That's one of the byproducts of the Farm Security Administration's plan for bringing medical care to low-income farm families, started 3 years ago. Relief and low-income farm families, the Farm Security Administration realized, must be first of all good consumers of medical care. Then the job of rehabilitating them into self-sustaining consumers of other things in the economic system can be undertaken.

Bad as the provisions for adequate medical

care are among low-income families generally, they reach their lowest point in remote rural areas among the relief-level families or those families whose income rarely goes over the \$500 mark a year. When Farmer Smith's 3-year-old son develops a sudden fever, or when there is an addition expected in the family, or when there is a serious accident on the farm, Farmer Smith's first thought is usually not "get a doctor," but "how are we going to pay for the doctor?"

When the doctor comes—if there is a doctor nearby and if he does come—he knows that there is probably no money in the house for his fee. To him this is a professional duty, compensation for which will have to wait on the weather, or the price of wheat or cotton on an exchange floor a thousand miles away. If the crop is good and the market steady, the country doctor might get paid in part. Or perhaps Farmer Smith may give the doctor a week's supply of fresh vegetables when harvest time rolls around.

If either of these things happens, the doctor is lucky. More likely the bill will be filed away, under "uncollectible." Pretty soon the country doctor, if he is young enough and has a little extra capital, will pack his bags, close his office, and strike out

for the city in hopes of a more profitable practice. Odds are against there being a successor to him.

"Many of our rural communities today are in dire need of suitable medical attention and hospitalization," the head of one of the large farm women's organizations told the National Health Conference in Washington last July. "Even at the peak of agricultural and national prosperity, four-fifths of the rural areas of the United States lacked any organized health service. Generally speaking, human life in the United States today is being wasted recklessly."

There were doctors, there were hospitals, there was some equipment—but these were hardly enough to fill the void. The Bureau



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REGULAR examinations and babies' and children's clinics form an important part of most of the FSA health plans. Few of the parents of these children could afford physical check-ups if it were not for the cooperative health program. Families pay from \$15 to \$30 a year for complete medical care under the program.

of Agricultural Economics made a study 3 years ago of rural medical facilities in 19 States and found that as a whole farm families set aside 8 percent of the total family budget for medical care. Yet, the report found, rural areas, compared to urban centers, were undersupplied in doctors, dentists, nurses, and hospitals. Massachusetts—90 percent urban—had 147 private physicians and 100 hospitals per 100,000 population; North Carolina—79 percent rural—had only 71 doctors and 56 hospitals for the same number of people. "It appears that urban areas have roughly double the per capita medical facilities that rural areas have," concludes the report.

As serious as the lack of medical care is in rural areas as a whole, it becomes many times worse for the low-income farm family, the family on relief or of near-relief status. Costs of medical care in rural areas have gone up in the past 20 years; at the same time, the rural slum has been taking its toll of more and more farm families cast adrift by impoverishment.

In poor southern areas—particularly among sharecroppers—expenditures for medical care were found to be considerably less than among more prosperous farm families in 1936 by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics study. "This does not mean that the sharecroppers have less sickness, but rather that they have less money with which to pay for medical care and consequently receive less care and have higher disability and death rates," declares the report.

A study in the Ozark area of Arkansas brings the same picture—more sickness among the low-income farm families, less medical care, and naturally, a population unfit for the fight for rehabilitation.

Medical care for most of the Farm Security Administration rehabilitation families now under the health program used to be definitely a luxury item, something to be resorted to only when sickness reached its most serious stages. Facing those families was a dual barrier: lack of medical facilities; and the inability to pay for what services were available.

When the Farm Security Administration stepped into the picture, it put health first on the rehabilitation program of farm families. This is not merely emergency care, but a program of preventive medicine set up on a cooperative basis so that all families who take part in the program can have medical care whenever they need it, and regular check-ups to catch at their onset serious disease or disability.

For the doctors, too, such a program means more security—economic security. Now they are being paid in cash for their services, and in return are rendering medical care to low-income farm families who previously seldom were in a position to pay when sickness struck.

"The United States Department of Agriculture is directly interested . . . in the health conditions of rural families," wrote the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture a few years ago. "In the last analysis the whole program of work of the Department is aimed at the betterment of farm life in this country, and surely health is a first consideration in measuring a well-rounded satisfying life."

To attain that "betterment of farm life," the Farm Security Administration has for several years been rehabilitating hundreds of thousands of destitute farm families. To do this it has had to resettle many of these families on new land. Then it has loaned them money at regular interest rates to purchase equipment and household necessities. Finally, it has given help and advice for planning the farm and home program. In that way the families have been taken off relief rolls and put on the road to a self-sustaining life.

The Farm Security Administration knows that economic and social programs of rehabilitation fail when there is no program of health rehabilitation.

"Quite aside from any humanitarian purposes," says the head of the Farm Security Administration, "the Farm Security Administration has found, as a lending agency, that a family in good health is a better credit risk than a family in bad health. It has developed plans for medical care because it has found that good health is a necessary part of a family's rehabilitation."

Good health for relief farm families must be budgeted if sudden sickness is not to

wreck a family's whole program of financial independence. True, a family might go several months or even years without a hospital or doctor's bill, and then, suddenly, find itself once more at the destitute level as the unplanned for medical bill eats into resources and savings. To avoid this, it was decided that a good plan would be to have each family contribute a small sum each month in return for medical care whenever needed.

That meant cooperation among a group of Farm Security Administration clients and other eligible families in any given area, who band together and pay a specified amount each month for medical care for the family. Sometimes the medical care covers hospitalization, sometimes dental examination and treatment. But almost always the plan covers regular examinations, some form of preventive medicine, needed drugs, and medical attention whenever the family actually needs it—not after all household remedies and patent medicines have failed.

Families have, wherever possible, free choice of physician, and county and State medical societies supervise the administration of the plan in cooperation with representatives of each medical cooperative, and with whatever help is needed from Farm Security Administration officials.

Usually the Government lends the family funds to pay its medical insurance under the plan, though in some cases the family is able to pay out of its own earned income. These loans differ from loans for equipment and other purposes only in that they are earmarked for medical care and must be used for this and for nothing else. As with the other types of rehabilitation loans by the Farm Security Administration, these are being repaid far more rapidly than had been expected as impoverished families once again find themselves making a going concern of the family budget book. Of course, many of the families find themselves able to pay for the health care out of their own income after a year or two and no longer need the loans.

Today some 130,000 families are receiving medical care under this set-up. Projects are operating in 23 States, and are being extended to include more of the 700,000 low-income and destitute farm families on Farm Security Administration rolls.

Each of these families is paying between \$15 and \$30 a year—depending on its ability to pay and the type of plan offered—for medical care. Few families withdraw from this type of insurance once they realize the need for it; few doctors have found themselves opposed to this method of securing payment for medical care from families who

otherwise could never bear the financial burden of illness.

There are two general types of projects. First, the rehabilitation projects where farmers in one or 2 counties become members of the cooperative and are served by any of the physicians joining in the plan. And, second, the health programs in the Farm Security Administration community projects, where families have been resettled in small communities, in an attempt to make them self-sustaining by development of local industry and agriculture.

In the first type of plan, the family pays its dues to a trustee who pools the funds into a lump sum. Usually a certain percentage of the pooled amount is set aside for hospitalization and emergency needs, including surgical care. Then the rest is divided up into equal monthly allotments. Each month doctors participating in the plan submit their bills for all families who have been served by them.

A committee chosen from the doctors themselves goes over the bills, cutting those charges that it feels are too large, and checking fees against the standard schedules that have been set up.

If there is enough money in the pool for that month, the doctors are paid in full; if not they are paid pro rata for their share out of the funds. If there is a surplus, it is carried over to the next month, and if at the end of the year there is anything left over, the funds are used to complete paying

bills for those months when the pool ran short.

Coffee County Health Association in Alabama has such a plan. There, families pay from \$18 to \$30 a year for medical care, depending on the size of the family. Two-thirds of the money goes for doctors' bills, after a 5 percent deduction is set aside for administration expenses. The remainder is for hospitalization and surgical care. Fifteen doctors and surgeons serve the 307 member families.

Last year 74 percent of all doctors' bills presented were paid, and hospital and surgical bills were paid in full. The doctors and hospital submitted bills that totaled \$9,868.78; all but \$1,875.41 was paid—this, remember, from families who in the past rarely could pay even a small part of the doctors' and hospital bills. The doctors made a total of 918 visits to the homes of members, and 1,717 visits were made to the doctors' offices. A total of 913 persons received some kind of medical care during the year, while 78 had hospitalization or surgical treatment. Average dues were \$27.15; average medical bill was \$23.63 a family, and hospital bills (spread over all the families) averaged \$8.51.

That the doctors approved of the plan is indicated by this simple statement by the officers of the county society: "After one year's operation of this Health Association Plan in Coffee County, the Coffee County Medical Society, consisting of fifteen physi-

cians and surgeons, is much pleased with the results obtained.

"The members of this society unanimously approve of the plan for 1939 and urge that it be extended to take on more families in the Farm Security Administration program in Coffee County."

Out in Tygart Valley Homesteads, nestled high up on a plateau of the West Virginia Mountains, is a good working example of the "community-type" plan. There are over 30 of this type of plan in operation. Some of these health plans are of necessity restricted to one physician because of the community's remoteness and distance from any well-populated areas.

Tygart Valley is one of these. Over 120 families of the Tygart Valley settlement are now voluntarily paying \$2.25 a month out of their own incomes for complete medical and hospital care for the family. Joined into an association, the members elect their own board members, who administer the plan in cooperation with the doctor and a Government adviser. Before the plan went into effect there was only a community nurse on the project to give emergency medical attention. The nearest doctors were in a town about 10 miles distant.

One dollar of the members' monthly dues goes for the doctor's pay. (He is also paid a small amount by the Government for community health administration and is also required to give medical care to non-members of the association at a small fee.) One dollar goes into the hospitalization fund under an arrangement with 2 modern hospitals in a nearby city. The remaining 25 cents goes for overhead and into the drug fund, for purchase of all medicines and supplies, except the more expensive ones which the patient gets at cost.

A well equipped clinic is provided the doctor, including a waiting room, consultation room, examination room, and laboratory. Several pieces of the equipment, including an examination table, were constructed by members of the association—most of whom were farmers, miners, or woodsmen before they took up residence on the homesteads.

The young doctor in charge, assisted by a capable nurse, has set up a well-organized community health plan, that includes periodical examinations for all members of the association, pre-natal clinics, infants' clinics, nursery-age children's clinics, and all phases of preventive medicine, such as inoculations against typhoid and other diseases, advice on diet, and so on. The families pay no extra charge except a 50-cent fee for the first

[Concluded on page 14]



QUACK MEDICINES and cure-all "herbs" still find a ready market among impoverished rural families unable to afford proper medical care. Today over 130,000 low-income rural families receive adequate medical attention under the FSA program. And to the poorly paid country doctor has come economic security because of the plan.



CONFERENCE



RECENTLY a letter went out from Washington to a woman in Muleshoe, Texas. She is a farm woman. She knows the aches and pleasures of living from the soil. She knows what the ups and downs in farm income mean to the clothes her children can wear, to the food they eat, to the schools they can go to, to the medical care they can get.

Come to Washington, the letter said, and talk it over with the Secretary of Agriculture and his associates in administering farm programs. The letter went on: "The American home needs abundance of food and clothing. The American farmer needs buyers for the abundance he produces so that he may enjoy some of the abundance that industry can produce. The increasing balanced abundance that both the American home and the American farm want can be brought about only if homemakers and farmers understand that the problems they face together are essentially the same. These are also the problems with which the Department of Agriculture must deal on behalf of all consumers and all producers.

"To deal with these problems Congress has given certain powers and duties to the Secretary and to the Department of Agriculture. How can we best use them for the benefit of the consumer, the producer, and the general welfare?

"We want to work these problems out in the American way, the way of a Democracy. We do, therefore, want your thought and counsel. I am sure we shall have them in good measure. We have the feeling that better solutions are found to problems of a Democracy in proportion as the people understand their problems."

Forty-nine other women got such a letter, too, all of them leaders of women in their communities, or State, or Nation, and each of them a homemaker who takes time to think about the problems of other people, as well as her own. Some of them help lick those problems by working in farm organizations; in home demonstration clubs; in

church and school groups. Some work at them in labor, cooperative, and consumer organizations. Some know at first hand what it means to live on less than \$20 a week; others are better off, but the people they try to help are not. Some live in cities, some on the farm. Some live in the South, others in the West, North, and East.

These 50 women came to Washington. For 2 days they stayed. Questions were put to them. The women gave their opinions in answer, or posed questions, in turn, of their own.

Democracy was at work, those days, vigorously, realistically, enthusiastically. As the Secretary had said: "The answer to problems relating to securing abundance, if it is going to be found in a democratic country, will have to come out of the thinking of the people themselves, rather than out of the thinking of any group of officials." And so they thought. And the thinking went to the heart of America's biggest problems.

Answers to such problems are not to be had easily. "The greatest cost," said Secretary Wallace, "is thinking. That is the hardest work there is—I mean, thinking outside customary channels." Complete answers can come only from every citizen, not just from 50 citizens. Such conferences as these in Washington were just to show the direction in which thinking needs to be done. They were not to dictate thought. Nor were they intended to reach conclusions. They proposed simply to focus attention on basic difficulties confronting America and by so focusing to stimulate through these women the thinking of women everywhere.

Do We Have Abundance in America?

Each of us wants it. We want it for everyone else. But do we have abundance?

This was the first question posed to the women who came to talk with Department of Agriculture officers.

First, they said, let's define what we mean by abundance. "A little more than the absolute necessities," said one woman. "It's

more than just physical things," said another, "it includes spiritual and aesthetic essentials, too." From one citizen came the reminder that what might be abundance for her might not be abundance for the next one. We have abundance, said another, but we don't have good distribution of it.

Soon the women were recounting evidences of the lack of abundance. "Take Fall River, Massachusetts," said one. "I don't know of any city where the contradiction of potentiality for abundance and the actual lack of it is more striking. Hundreds of empty mills, mill space where nothing is being manufactured, where all the facilities for manufacturing are there, but nothing is being made. And on the other hand, hundreds of dilapidated tenements where dilapidated people are living without enough money to purchase the barest necessities of life."

"Almost one million people in Chicago are living in families whose incomes are less than \$800 per year," remarked another visitor.



"THE ANSWER to problems relating to securing abundance, if it is going to be found in a democratic country, will have to come out of the thinking of the people rather than out of the thinking of any group of officials."

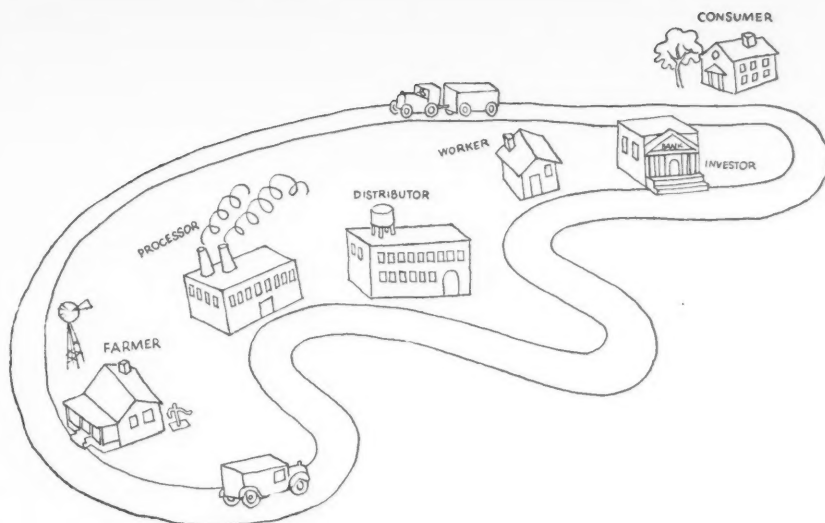
"Easter Monday I stopped in to see one of our members. I found her in bed recuperating from a long illness. Her oldest daughter, 14 years old, had to stay home to be nurse and mother to the other children. I was invited to stay for lunch. That consisted of pancakes and tea. I asked her, 'What did you have for breakfast?' She said, 'Porridge.' I said, 'What will you have for dinner?' She said, 'Pork and beans.' And she added, 'I'm sick of pork and beans.' The mother was very proud of this little daughter who could take care of a home, and she hoped that she would soon be well so that her little girl could go back to school. This family's income was \$55 a month."

"When I traveled from St. Louis to Washington yesterday and the day before," said another citizen, from Missouri, "I purposely made as much of the trip by daylight as possible, and I tried to make the trip as though I was making it for the first time. I looked out of the train windows all of the time, and when I came to the end of the journey the one word that would express what I saw would be the word 'shabby.' That holds true of town and country alike. Now, of course, you will say, 'You came on the railroad and you saw the shabby part of the cities.' But, then, there they are."

More evidences of lack of abundance poured out. From Georgia: "Many of the people in Georgia are eating pepper grass as their only substitute for vegetables and fruits. They go along the railroad track and gather pepper grass . . . As I go about in the South amongst the textile workers and amongst other workers in other industries and see some of the things I see, it challenges my conscience."

"In Iowa," reported another leader, "we are supposed to have A-No. 1 agricultural land, and yet as I drive up and down the highways of Iowa I see many homes that are not painted, and many homes in ill repair, and many things low in abundance. They are not getting the things they need, and I know if I went inside those homes, I would find only about one-fourth of the homes have electricity; only about 8 percent of the tenant homes in Iowa have running water in them. Although these things exist, we are not getting them into the homes of the people."

They didn't specifically define the ingredients of "abundance," these consultants with the Department of Agriculture. With such accounts as these, however, they made clear that what we have is far from "abundance." And, said one woman, "Unless we have abundance for all, the abundance of some is bound to be in danger."



"INCREASING balanced abundance that both the American home and the American farm want can be brought about only if homemakers and farmers understand that the problems they face are essentially the same. These are the problems with which the Department of Agriculture must deal on behalf of all consumers and all producers."

Can America Produce Abundance?

Second poser presented to the 50 women, sensitive to the needs of the country, was this one.

Out of their comments grew the request that they be supplied with facts: Facts as to how much productive power we have; as to whether we can organize that power so that we can produce abundance; as to whether we can get it spread around so that each person gets at least an irreducible share of security and necessities.

From an expert came these statements in answer to such requests for facts: "On the agricultural and industrial side we have the knowledge and the physical basis to produce a very much higher standard of living than we now produce." We are not using our full capacity to produce. One estimate says that even in 1929, 20 percent of our capacity was going unused. Another indicates that in 1929 "we could have produced a national income of 135 billion dollars in goods and services, as against the 96 billion we did

have." "If we used effectively our present resources and our present labor and techniques, we could increase our physical production today sufficiently so that, without raising the cost of living, all families with less than \$2,000 incomes could have \$2,000 a year, and those with more could still live as well as they lived in 1929. That is assuming, of course, that all the increased production was somehow distributed to those who now have less than \$2,000."

One citizen sagely remarked that this was more than a physical problem. "It seems to me that there is also a social and human problem that must be taken into consideration."

Why Don't We Have Abundance?

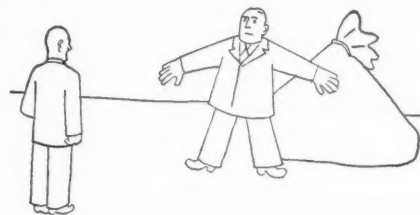
If there is merit in the claim that America has the capacity to produce abundance, what is stopping her people from doing so?

This third question provoked more lively discussion.

It's the cost of things, some said, that stands in the way of everyone enjoying abundance; prices that don't change as incomes change.

"Industries that produce consumer goods have restricted their production and have kept prices up," said one woman. On the other hand, "the farmer sells on a non-restricted basis. That is, he produces as much as he can, and so he is caught between this rigid price up here and the price at which he has to sell."

"UNLESS we have abundance for all, the abundance of some is bound to be in danger."



Others claimed that those industries most highly monopolized are able to control the prices at which articles are sold. Those where a considerable extent of competition exists, as in clothing, do change their prices as buying power changes. In industries where competitive prices are not operative, or where there is no public control of price, such industries "can elect at their own discretion to retain an unduly large share of income for their own pockets and disburse a small part as buying power to the community."

Some figures produced by the experts at this point gave pause: "Between 1923 and 1929," it was said, "we had perhaps a 20 percent increase in the output per worker. During that period, the total wage disbursements of all city industries increased only 20 percent—just the amount that the number of workers employed increased. In other words there was no gain at all in the income of workers in city industries between these years. During the same period, however, payments in the form of dividends and interest increased 50 percent. Payments going to those who do not expend all that income on consumption increased $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as fast as the payments going to the great mass of the population who might have consumed the products of industry had they been given the buying power."

But price policies alone were not held accountable by these debaters for lack of abundance. Wages and wage rates came in for a share of attention.

"We farmers," said a woman from the West, "certainly know that if the wage earner doesn't have sufficient wages to purchase the food that is necessary to maintain his family, as it should be maintained, he can't purchase the products which the farmer produces. We know that."

"Yes," said another, "and if the farmer doesn't get the price for his products, he can't purchase the products of labor."

Standing between the farmer and the buyer of farm products are many middlemen—processors, transporters, dealers. From North Dakota came the story from one woman, of rye put on the train by farmers at a cost to them of 2 cents a bushel, when a loaf of rye bread sold for 15 cents in the stores of the same town. Such facts give farmers pause. "Yes," said another, "and while the binder which we have had to buy has gone up in price, the price of wheat has gone down."

Does one of the reasons why America has not an abundance lie in investment policies? The women asked themselves that. What's stopping private investment? Someone

brought out the fact that Government was doing a lot of investment. But could Government do it alone? Was there still not need for greatly increased private investment that would build up new opportunities for employment, new products for consumers, new sources of income for capital?

Large questions, such as these, need large answers. The women, naturally, did not have complete answers.

What Does America Need for Abundance?

Ideas came brisk and fast as the women explored America's unfilled needs. Food came first, as it does in life.

From one of the Department of Agriculture experts—herself a woman who has given deep thought to and research on America's diet—there was a report that "half of the population now have diets which will not furnish a satisfactory level of living."

Would diets be improved if there were more and better education? First, said many of the women, we have to see that many families get more income. Forty-two out of every 100 families have incomes of less than \$20 a week; 14 out of every 100 have incomes of less than \$10 a week. "Now you cannot give these 14 a lecture on diet," said one woman. "You can't tell them that they must have meat and vegetables, green vegetables, in order to live properly. I think that when you provide an adequate income you can then go on and teach them how to live."

But some people, allowed another woman, don't like the things that are good for them. A delegate from the South averred that many families in her part of the country could produce a better balanced diet, but don't. But how about city families? "You can't raise a nutritive diet on the back steps of a

city tenement house," observed one citizen from the North. Another thought many city families have to do what working girls she has observed do. "If they have to have more clothes or carfare or a present for somebody, they take it out of their food budget. I think everyone of us," she said, "tends to cut down on the food budget first."

First on the list of agreed needs, then, was greater buying power. Next came more information on how to get the best returns for income.

What about the education people are getting now? Is there enough of it? Is it good enough? The women pondered on these questions.

"We are educating our boys and girls on the premise that they are going to go to college and be professors. We want them to think they are all going to be doctors and lawyers and white-collar men. Is it any disgrace," asked this woman, "to teach them to work with their hands?"

"Those of us who belong to unions," reported another, "have had our hours shortened. We have more leisure than we used to have." She was for more education not only to occupy leisure time but to learn how to use it profitably.

From a Wisconsin woman came the statement that only 50 percent of the rural children ever go to high school.

Inadequate incomes, it was suggested, were at the root of this; incomes that would not provide decent clothing to wear to school; incomes that made transportation impossible; incomes that have to be supplemented by the labor of everyone in the family capable of working.

There should be more vocational education in high schools, claimed one. Another wanted more home economics training and

"WHATEVER is done, let's do it the democratic way. Plan from the bottom up, instead of from the top down."



wanted it taught in grade schools. More aid from the Federal Government, others thought, would help.

Bobbing up constantly in the talk was the problem of low incomes. After all, schools and education cost money. How are we to have more, until incomes are raised, pondered these women.

What Would You Do To Supply Abundance in America?

"I would start industry and put people to work," came the first answer to this fifth question.

"Why would you do that?" this farm woman was asked.

"Because it would give workers the financial ability to buy agricultural products which in turn would give the farmer the ability to buy manufactured goods," she replied.

Such reasoning sounded like good sense to some of the city women too.

Other suggestions poured out. Among them, an annual wage for workers.

"If we have a hired man," commented another farm woman, "we contract him for a year, and we figure out a job for this length of time. Industry takes workers on and lays them off. I believe in a year's salary instead of an hourly rate, and then let the employer figure out what the worker is to do during the year."

Stable prices for farm products, which would make planning ahead possible, was another solution proposed.

Developing consumer cooperatives, tying in labor and farmers, would be a useful plan, thought another visitor.

Allaying business fears would help, one believed, because then investment would be encouraged.

Remove regional handicaps, said another. Trade barriers between States and between regions should go, she claimed.

Reduce the spread between farm and city prices, urged another.

Two ideas captured the greatest support: First, let's get to know each other—farm and city people. "I think there is in the American people the ability to work out any difficulty if they first realize what that difficulty is and then cooperate."

Another proposed starting a know-each-other program with the school children. She would have city school children visit rural schools, and the reverse. Get the women together, urged another. Get people talking their problems, several urged; manufacturers, workers, farmers, consumers, everybody.

Second support-gathering proposal was this: Whatever is done, let's do it the demo-

DO YOU KNOW SIX PEOPLE?

Six people, that is, who like to have a cracker-barrel kind of confab of an evening? "Chew the rag" about this and that? Do you know such people, six of them?

Then how about planning—right now—for some cracker-barrel discussions next winter that will dig at the answers to the same questions these 50 women discussed with the Secretary of Agriculture? There's life and fun in such a gabfest, if what's happening to America is important to you. There's hope for democracy if you and your friends take time to thresh out these problems. If living in a democracy is worth something to you, you will.

Pick the people who seem to have the widest differences in point of view. Try to pull together people who earn their living in different ways: people who work for wages; people who are bosses; people who work on farms; people who work at home.

Sit around the dining room table, when you do your talking, so that anybody who wants to bang his point home has something to bang on.

Keep the ball tossing back and forth, and don't skip anybody.

We'll guarantee you'll have fun, on one condition. That's an important one. Good discussion comes only from people who admit that the next person is as decent a person, as worth listening to, and as deserving of his opinion, as the first. You'll have fun if you keep the talk good natured.

And remember, the reason for "chewing the rag" is not to make somebody else admit something he doesn't believe. It's to help you clear up your own thinking. If the next person believes what you say, that's one up. If he doesn't, maybe you haven't put your point across. Don't hold it against him.

Here's how we'll help. If you and six other people want to plan, say 7 evenings of cracker-barrel confabs next winter—once a month, perhaps, from October to April—write the *Consumers' Guide* and we'll send you some suggestions on how you can hold such confabs and some material that will provoke lively questions. It's yours for the asking. Nothing in this material is designed to sell you anything.

cratic way. "Plan from the bottom up, instead of from the top down," said one.

Is an Agricultural Program the Responsibility of Rural People Only?

"I have four children," said one woman when she was asked this question. "Two of them were graduated from school. They were raised in a rural community. One of them is in Boston; the other, in Chicago. You people in Boston and Chicago ought to be interested in the kind of material I sent to you, and I ought to be interested in the kind of environment you are creating for the boy or girl I sent you."

An agricultural program, these city and country women felt, was something that touched the lives of everyone.

An "ever-normal-granary" plan, they said, was tackling a national, not a group, problem. Whether food is abundantly available in a drought year is important to city people as well as farmers.

Programs that help to conserve soil help to preserve the chance for abundance for the next generation of consumers, thought another woman. "The farmer is custodian of

the land which is the Nation's fundamental wealth."

The food stamp plan, too, seemed like another program of significance alike to city and country people.

Among these women it seemed agreed that everybody in the Nation has an investment in a farm program. Furthermore, the producer of one kind of farm product has a concern in the fortunes of the producer of another kind. Said one woman: "I am interested in knowing what the cotton farmer is doing. I need to know and understand, because I need the product. We raise wheat out there in our section. I know that cotton growers need our wheat. Each of us needs the products that others produce."

"We all agree," concluded another, "that we need food. We all need that whether we live in town or in rural communities. We are agreed that in one way or another food comes from the farmer, and if we can't keep our farms, how are we going to get anything to eat?"

"If we as farmers can raise some money, we are going to buy a lot of things from you

[Concluded on page 14]

A Quiz on Ice Cream

When you buy ice cream, do you ask: How pure is it? What's in it? How much air does it contain? Do I get full measure?



ICE CREAM buyers ordinarily are looking for a mouthful of flavorsome internal air conditioning. But no ice cream fancier wants to trade a small amount of discomfort from the heat for a milk-borne disease. Whether or not he poses ice cream question No. 1, when he asks for a pint of chocolate, he still wants to be sure that it is a pint of *pure* chocolate ice cream he is buying. Consciously or unconsciously, he asks, "Is it pure?"

To this question there should be only one answer: "Of course." Otherwise the public health authorities wouldn't let it be sold.

But pure ice cream, like pure milk, depends upon a law or ordinance and its enforcement. As alert milk consumers know there is a checklist of specifications which guarantees them pure milk. Since ice cream is a milk product, the ice cream checklist, as might be expected, reads like the milk list.

The milk and cream which go into ice cream, or the ice cream mix, which is the milk and cream plus the other ice cream ingredients, should be pasteurized.

Ice cream should be free of visible dirt and of pathogenic organisms, which are experts' words for disease-bearing bacteria.

Ice cream plants should be sanitary enough so that there is no possible chance of contamination. (Refrigeration is compulsory for ice cream all the way from milk to the consumer.)

Synthetic flavors where they are permitted should be scrutinized carefully, and artificial colors where they are permitted should only be the kind that have been certified as harmless and pure by the Food and Drug Administration.

Finally, the number of bacteria per cubic centimeter in ice cream should be limited.

Milk consumers in some cities have come to rely on milk grades as their guarantee of purity. But grades sometimes may be trade fictions, not based on any official standard. There are, however, official ice cream grades in some cities, which, like milk grades, apply only to purity and quality. In Memphis, for example, the difference between Grade A ice cream and Grade B ice cream is chiefly a difference in the number of bacteria per cubic centimeter: 30,000 for Grade A ice cream, 50,000 for Grade B ice cream.

Grades, however, sum up more than bacterial content. They are usually a measure of all the factors which go to make up pure

WHEN YOU BUY ice cream, do you get full measure? When ice cream is packed before your eyes, insist on a standard-sized container, and see that it is packed in. Guessing won't get you anywhere when you must pick from non-standard containers. Be sure to read the label.

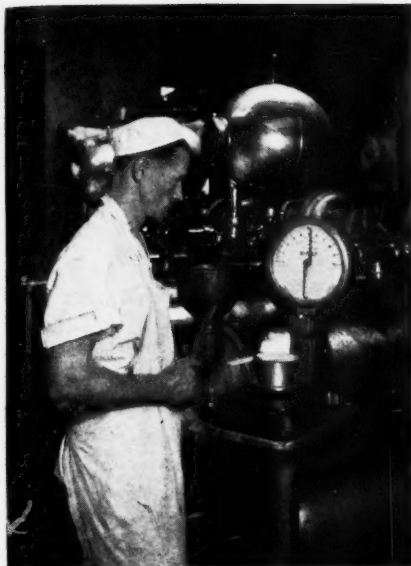
ice cream. But there are at least 2 things consumers should remember about them. Numerical grades are less desirable than letter grades since numerical grades give an impression of accuracy which is unwarranted. The factors which are totaled up into a numerical grade are not so precisely measured that there is much difference in sanitary safety between a score of 98 and 97. On the other hand, differences between Grade A ice cream and Grade B ice cream are real differences. The second important thing to remember about ice cream grades is that they measure only purity, and that an ice cream may be as sterile as a surgeon's scalpel and as pure as distilled water, and still be a poor quality ice cream.

Purity, obviously, isn't something that can be detected in ice cream by looking at it in the freezer. Just as in the case of milk, ice cream purity is determined finally by what's in the ice cream ordinance and the way the ordinance is enforced.

When consumers get down to the matter of ice cream purity they learn right off that they can't depend upon a Federal law, or upon a State law, but they must look to their cities to enforce purity.

They can, however, get some help from the Federal Government. A uniform ice cream ordinance, for example, is now in the process of formulation by the United States Public Health Service, the same agency which worked out the Standard Milk Ordinance. This ordinance is not ready yet, but when it





HOW MUCH AIR does ice cream contain? It must contain some, or it would not be ice cream. But if it contains too much you're paying for ice cream and not getting it. This gauge tells how much air ice cream contains.



IS the ice cream pure? It should be free of dirt and of disease bearing organisms. It should be pasteurized and be made in a sanitary plant. Ice cream purchased by the Federal Government may not contain more than 50,000 bacteria per cubic centimeter.



IS the ice cream palatable? If richness is your criterion, look at the butterfat content. Most States set a minimum, but above the minimum you get what you insist upon; from 8 to 28 percent by weight, in Washington, D. C. This gauge measures butterfat content at the factory.

is finally published, the *Consumers' Guide* will give consumers notice of the event.

Another way consumers can get help from the Federal Government is by reading its buying specifications for ice cream which it purchases for public institutions. So far as purity is concerned the Federal Government requires that ice cream be pasteurized, and that the number of bacteria in the ice cream not exceed 50,000 per cubic centimeter. It bars the use of artificial flavors altogether in its ice cream, but it permits the use of artificial colorings so long as they have been certified by the Food and Drug Administration.

There is a Latin tag which says one shouldn't argue about taste. It could also be phrased to say that each person has a right to his own food fads and prejudices. This isn't to be taken too seriously where children are concerned, but if you propose to argue about ice cream flavor with another adult you might just as well save your time. Some like rich ice cream, some like it less rich, some like ice cream syrupy, some like it hardly flavored at all. Obviously anyone who tries to be pontifical on ice cream flavor is just inviting contradiction.

But if nothing can be said finally on flavor, something can be said about the food value of ice cream.

Ice cream contains milk, cream, fruit flavors sometimes—chocolate, vanilla, or whatever you happen to think of at other times in the way of flavor—gelatin, sugar,

starch sometimes, eggs sometimes, and nuts sometimes.

Of them all, the milk, the cream, and the sugar are the most important constituents. Milk and cream add fat to ice cream, plus calcium, phosphorus, protein, Vitamin A, and Vitamin G. The sugar, of course, is a carbohydrate.

Since both food value and texture depend largely upon the cream in ice cream, and since by its name ice cream is supposed to have cream in it, every State in the Union has established some sort of minimum butterfat requirement for ice cream.

The legal minima vary from 8 to 14 percent by weight. Above these minima, however, consumers depending upon their own preferences, can get varying amounts of butterfat in their ice cream. In Washington, D. C., for example, a spot check showed that the butterfat content in ice cream ranged all the way from 8 percent up to 28 percent.

Milk solids other than butterfat are usually not subject to regulations by themselves. Ordinarily where States take into account the milk solid content of ice cream they lump it with butterfat content and set a minimum for the total milk solid content. This, of course, includes the butterfat content. This minimum may vary from 18 percent all the way to 35 percent.

No laws specify the sugar content of ice cream. In practice, however, ice cream contains somewhere around 15 percent sugar.

The Federal Government's buying specifications require that ice cream contain at least 12 percent butterfat, at least 16 percent of sucrose (cane sugar), and not more than one-half of one percent high grade gelatin.

The insistence on cane sugar is aimed at the possible substitution of other kinds of sugar for cane. The other varieties are less sweet than sucrose, and therefore must be used in larger amounts. Ice cream made from these other sugars must be kept at lower temperatures.

Air, offhand, will start no bubbles rising in the mind of a consumer intent on ice cream. But air is to ice cream what water is to milk. A certain amount of water in milk, or a certain amount of air in ice cream is inevitable.



ICE CREAM

The whipping and freezing which gives ice cream its creaminess, automatically puts air in it. Thus an ice cream manufacturer may start out with 1 gallon of ice cream ingredients and end with 2 gallons of ice cream. The additional gallon of ice cream is air. Technically it is called "overrun."

In the case where a gallon of ice cream ingredients is whipped up to 2 gallons of ice cream the overrun is 100 percent. But overrun can amount to as little as 30 percent and it can be fluffed up to more than 100 percent. Experts think that 45 percent overrun is a fair amount of air.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, when it is buying ice cream, doesn't like to pay for air in excess of 100 percent overrun. So when it orders ice cream it says to manufacturers in its specifications, "See to it that each gallon of ice cream weighs 4½ pounds."

Consumers, too, can use this test. If they follow it they should demand that ice cream weigh at least 1 pound 2 ounces per quart or 9 ounces a pint.

Some States, and occasionally some cities, have taken action to keep ice cream air pressure down. Georgia, Kansas, and Pennsylvania require ice cream to weigh 4.75 pounds per gallon. Since ice cream mix ordinarily weighs about 9.2 pounds to a gallon this permits ice cream manufacturers to get slightly less than 100 percent overrun, or to put it in terms of what consumers get: to put up ice cream that is half food and half air.

Illinois simply limits the overrun to 100 percent.

Connecticut and Idaho have gone at this problem differently. They insist that the food solids in ice cream weigh at least 1.6 pounds per gallon. Since the weight of food solids in ice cream ranges from 36 to 40 percent of the total weight this establishes a minimum figure of about 4.25 pounds per gallon for ice cream.

Still another way of keeping excessive air out of ice cream is used in Chicago where the melted volume of ice cream must be at least 50 percent of the volume as sold.

QUESTION 4 in the ice cream quiz is familiar enough to quizzical consumers. It is simply the old "Watch Your Weights and Measures" admonition applied to ice cream.

Consumers know well enough that chickens stuffed with lead are not the rule when they buy chickens, and that 14-ounce pound loaves of bread are exceptions. But they also know that there are enough chiselers to make it worthwhile keeping an eye open. And from their experience with can sizes that look alike but contain different amounts of

food, they know that careless commercial practices sometimes lead to consumer deception when there may be no desire at all to cheat.

Speaking to a group of ice cream manufacturers in New York, for example, a Weights and Measures official noted that the ice cream industry generally was clean both in its manufacturing processes and in its commercial practices. But, he continued, he had noticed the infiltration of some commercial practices into the ice cream industry which he deplored. So he asked the ice cream manufacturers to cooperate with him to stamp them out.

THE USE of deceptive containers was one practice he called attention to.

A Brooklyn, N. Y., ice cream company had a call from the Weights and Measures Bureau because it put up 4 fluid ounces of ice cream in a package that looked as if it contained 8 fluid ounces. At first this package had an upper compartment, which contained a toy or metal trinket. When the Health Authorities clamped down because the trinket might have contaminated the ice cream, the company tried putting a paper napkin and a wooden spoon in the compartment to see if that wouldn't get by. It didn't. The Weights and Measures Bureau ruled that the package misled purchasers, particularly the children who bought most of this particular ice cream. It stopped the practice.

Another practice the Weights and Measures official objected to was the use of off-size containers. So far as ice cream is concerned this takes the form of a "quart" package of ice cream containing only ¾ of a quart of ice cream.

Not even the ice cream retailers realize in this case that they are short-weighting their customers. They are asked for a quart of ice cream and they hand over the "quart" package. To give the practice a semblance of legality, manufacturers guilty of this practice make a point of printing the correct weight of the package on the label. That, of course, is another argument for reading the label, even of ice cream.

What alarmed the Weights and Measures official about this practice was not only the fact that it is unfair to the unsuspecting consumers who don't read labels, but that is an abuse which becomes progressively worse. Competition, he said, will gradually result in a smaller and smaller "quart" package until consumers are forced to step in and take a hand themselves. Already a 17½-ounce quart has been seen (there are 32 fluid ounces in a quart).

The kind of action consumers will insist

on, Weights and Measures experts say, will be a demand that ice cream be sold by the pound. Right now, however, Weights and Measures officials oppose the ice cream by weight scheme because it differs radically from present selling methods. To sell ice cream by the pound would mean that every little ice cream parlor and every drug store would have to buy scales.

Massachusetts has exorcised this ice cream evil, however. It has passed a law which requires ice cream to come in packages that are either 1 quart, 1 pint, ½ pint, or 1 gill in size. As a further insurance against ice cream clippers, the law provides that the State Director of the Weights and Measures Bureau may require standard shapes and dimensions.

On the subject of packages of ice cream, ice cream that is packed in a store while you watch the druggist scoop it out of the freezer, contains less air than ice cream which is packed at the ice cream factory. The scooping and packing by the druggist where it is packed tight, as it should be, forces the air out. For this reason ice cream costs more in bulk. But it is more ice cream.

Asking ice cream questions, it is plain, carries consumers back to an examination of their ice cream ordinances. When they get to the point where they are considering introducing an ordinance into their city, or bringing an old ordinance up-to-date, there are some provisions to be wary of. They are the kind that interfere with the sale of ice cream without adding anything to the purity or quality of ice cream.

THERE ARE, FOR EXAMPLE, regulations, whose only effect is that of a tariff. They bar ice cream made outside of a city from coming into the city, for no reason connected with the public health, but to protect local economic interests. The result of such regulations is to increase the price of ice cream to consumers without assuring them of better or purer ice cream.

Another kind of regulation, for which consumers should keep an eye open, is one which discriminates in favor of one group of ice cream manufacturers to the detriment of another group of manufacturers. Some ice cream ordinances specify construction or handling details so that small manufacturers would be barred from the ice cream business.

Ice cream ordinances can be written and enforced so that consumers, producers, and distributors are all given adequate protection without penalizing anyone unfairly.

"Health is the first wealth."

RALPH WALDO EMERSON



ICE CREAM, which is discussed elsewhere in this issue of the *Consumers' Guide* is also the subject of a discussion this month at the Food and Drug Administration here in Washington.

Under the provision of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938 which permits the Secretary of Agriculture to formulate definitions and standards of identity for food products, the Food and Drug Administration has now turned its attention to ice cream.

In a public announcement the Food and Drug Administration invited everyone interested to submit written statements embodying their opinions on a definition and standard of identity for ice cream. At the same time it also named a day for public hearings on the subject.

After everyone has had a chance to propose what he thinks should go into it, the Food and Drug Administration will then announce a proposed definition and standard.

These will be the subject of further public hearings.

Then finally, after all the testimony is in, an official standard and definition will be promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

In addition to ice cream, chocolate products and strained vegetables are also going through the process of acquiring definitions and standards.

Anyone who wants to contribute information, facts, or opinions on these subjects is invited to write to the Food Standards Committee, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

INSTITUTION is a high-powered word which commands about the same amount of respect in the fellowship of words that General commands in the army.

And that, the Federal Trade Commission believes, is a perfectly good reason why companies doing business for profit should not conceal themselves behind a word like institution which leads consumers to believe that

they are organizations engaged in non-profit making activities for the good of humanity.

A California company selling what it called health foods, for example, not so long ago caught the Federal Trade Commission's eye because it called itself an "Educational Institute." After sitting down and talking it over the "Educational Institute" finally agreed to sail under its own colors.

A Chicago drug company acquired a professorial look, too, by calling itself a "Medical Bureau of Information."

"Findings are," the Federal Trade Commission announced after looking at this company's medical information "that the name 'Medical Bureau of Information' is a trade name used by these respondents, and that these bureaus are for promoting the sale of the respondent's products and are not organizations or institutions for scientific research."

Holding that false facades are in violation of the Federal Trade Commission Act, the Federal Trade Commission ordered the company to come out in the open and play fair.

THE CRY for standards blew a sweet clear note not so long ago when a conference of musical experts in London called for a standard for note "A" in the musical scale. In the United States, "A" is standardized at 440 vibrations per second. But in other countries it ranges from 435 vibrations to 442 vibrations per second. And before the days of radios "A" was anything from 393 to 567 vibrations. Just as the lack of standard can sizes introduces confusion into consumer buying, so the nonstandard "A" introduces confusion into an orchestra. The request for a standard "A" has been referred to the International Standards Association which will then refer it for action to the countries affiliated with the Association.

FRECKLES to some minds are decidedly fetching, but there are people who examine them ruefully in their mirrors.

For them the first sun freckle is a signal for a trip to the drugstore in search of a bleaching cream or a freckle remover.

To protect these people from disfiguration far beyond the power of a harmless freckle or so, the Food and Drug Administration has recently issued a notice to the manufacturers of mercury bleach cream.

Creams containing ammoniated mercury are dangerous to an "unusually large percentage of persons." To protect consumers, therefore, the Food and Drug Administration has announced that it will seize any cream containing more than 5 percent of this chemical. More than 2/10 of 1 percent of bichloride of mercury also makes a cream illegal in the eyes of the Food and Drug Administration. Comparable amounts of other mercury preparations will render creams containing them liable to seizure.

All mercury creams from now on must carry warnings. First of all, no such preparation should be applied when the skin is cut, bruised, sunburned, or sore. Nor should a cream be used after a depilatory has been applied. The application of a mercury cream over a large area of skin is also dangerous.

People who use the creams should stop using them the moment any irritation appears.

Labels on these creams, the Food and Drug Administration says, should advise consumers to test the creams before they use them, and directions for testing should appear on the labels with the warnings.

In no case, the Food and Drug Administration says, should the cream be applied vigorously. Where it is applied, it should be put on in very thin layers and should not be left on for more than a half hour. At the end of a half hour the cream should be removed with benzine or oil.

Mercury creams, the Food and Drug Administration says, cannot be expected to have more than a temporary bleaching effect on the skin. Creams which might remove freckles are so dangerous that they are illegal.



So that consumers won't be misled by broad claims, the Food and Drug Administration has announced that it will proceed against firms which make broad misleading claims on their labels. If they make them in advertisements, the Federal Trade Commission will proceed against them.

The Food and Drug warning to the mercury cream manufacturers was issued after qualified experts on the effects of mercury had been consulted. The warnings are based on these experts' recommendations.

Since there are bleaching creams on the market now which do not come under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, because they are on druggists' shelves and will not travel in interstate commerce or because they are made and sold within a single State, the warning the Food and Drug Administration has made to manufacturers should serve as a timely warning to consumers, too.

MOTHS may or may not find a fatal lure in a candle flame. On that the experts of the Federal Trade Commission venture no opinion, but their own researches and the researches of other Government experts do indicate that the moth-flame technique is not an infallible method for the elimination of mosquitoes.

Espousing the moth-flame principle a Brooklyn, N. Y., company ran afoul of the Federal Trade Commission Act by advertising that its lantern attracted and electrocuted mosquitoes, gnats, and many other insects.

The lantern, when lighted, theoretically attracted insects which were then electrocuted by charged wires which encircled it.

Experts examined the claims for this lantern and learned that the light did not attract enough insects to make the lantern worthwhile, that insects were not always electrocuted when they touched the charged wires, and that those that did die didn't necessarily succumb to the electric wires.

Confronted with these facts the lantern company admitted that they were substantially correct, and agreed to modify its advertising in the future.

50 WOMEN TALK IT OUT

[Concluded from page 9]

in the cities. We will put in bathrooms and buy much nicer clothes and go places. We will get better homes. We will give our children better education, better entertainment, and make them better Americans. I want them to be better Americans."

Seventh, and final, question put to the women was this one.

What Can an Agricultural Policy Contribute to Better Living?

Agricultural policy can do something about farm tenancy, said several women. Uncertainty of tenancy makes poor farmers, and poor farming wastes land and human wealth, they pointed out. People who live long enough in one place to vote make better citizens, one woman commented.

Perhaps a farm program could do something to help poor farmers along the road to better living by encouraging cooperative enterprise, suggested one. "I don't know why there couldn't be cooperative features in farming, where farm tools are owned cooperatively, where the land could be owned cooperatively. In that way people could do together what they cannot do individually."

CERTAINLY, concluded these women, the people to whom building a better America is important should know what present agricultural policy is attempting to do. They fired their own questions at the experts from the Department of Agriculture. Tell us, they said, what is being done to conserve soil; to ensure food supplies in bad years; to gain parity prices for farmers; to insure crops; to reestablish farm families on the bottom rung of the income ladder; to move surplus foods to the people who need them most. The experts were there to give their answers.

But Agriculture can't do this job of building a better living alone, these women said. Agriculture needs the cooperation of Commerce, of Labor, and other agencies of government. From some came the suggestion that WPA, Social Security, Unemployment Insurance—all were helping the farmer lick his problem of insecure and inadequate living by helping the people who want to buy his products.

And so it went, this series of discussions. And so it can go in every village and city in the country where there are people who want to be responsible citizens. "I can't think the word could be said often enough," remarked one woman. "It is 'haste.' Don't wait for the next depression to determine what is going to happen to us after that. Begin now to be responsible, to be intelligent, to be informed, to work with other groups. By the interplay of ideas between these groups, we will accomplish what we want. I think," she concluded, "if we women are sincere and honest about the thing, we can start a tremendous movement that will spread to other groups throughout the country."

HEALTH SECURITY FOR THE ECONOMICALLY INSECURE

[Concluded from page 5]

night visit and a 25-cent fee for the first day visit in any one illness, the purpose of this being largely to discourage families from calling the busy doctor when they might make an office visit.

Recently a dentist set up an office on the project and for 50 cents a month per family is giving complete dental care for all children under the age of 15—children who for the most part never had a tooth examination in their lives. Later he hopes to extend the insurance scheme to adults.

"The plan is the finest thing on the project," remarked one enthusiastic member. "These people never had medical care like this before. And remember—they *wanted* the plan. It was largely at the demand of the homesteaders that the plan was set up. . ."

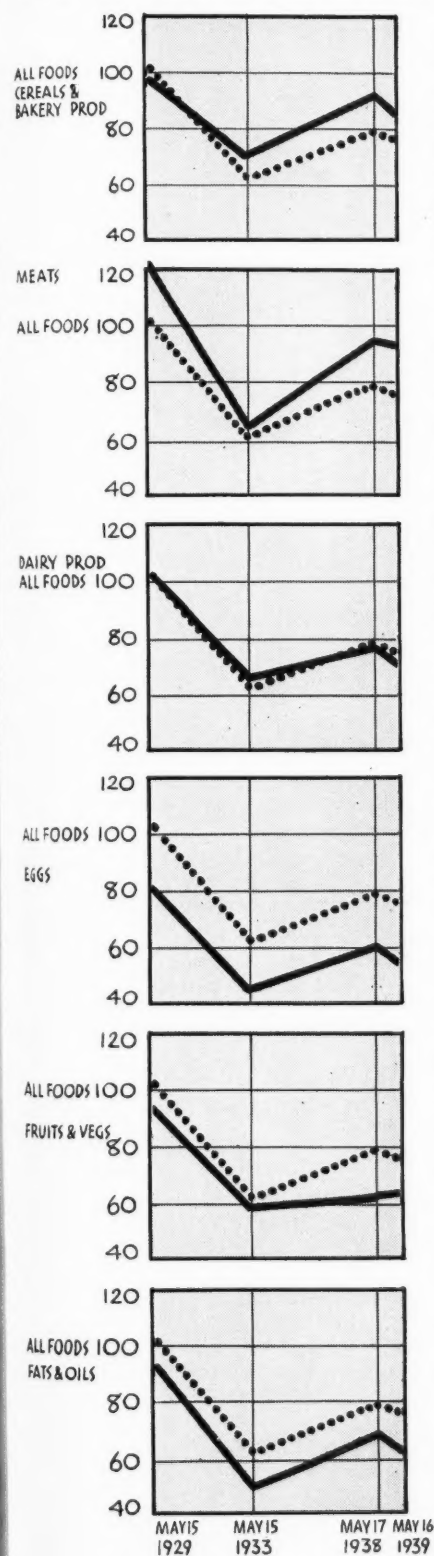
A woman told of her husband who had had a sudden attack of appendicitis. "I don't know what we would have done if we hadn't belonged to the association," she said. "We probably would have been in debt for years paying off the bill." Her husband's operation cost him nothing more than his monthly dues.

A man whose 2 children had had serious accidents the past winter saw them both get the best hospital and surgical care available and come home in tip-top shape. "And the only expense he had was the cost of the trips back and forth to the hospital," remarked one of his friends. "His kids probably would never have had hospital care if not for the plan."

The young mother on whose skirts tugged a rosy-cheeked 2-year-old daughter was all for the health association. "I had the doctor before she was born, and let me tell you, I wouldn't miss the clinic for anything. Whenever the children get sick now, I don't worry about paying the doctor. All I have to do is call him, and I know everything possible is being done without anything happening to my small budget."

"CERTAINLY they're happier and healthier because they have regular medical attention," said the doctor, impatient at the question. "From my angle, it's a lot surer to stop a sickness before it gets started than have to be called in three days later when the fever's up and the patient weak. We work on the theory of prevention. It's the best kind of medical care, because it's designed to prevent illness, not cure it after it's too late."

A PERSPECTIVE



FOOD COSTS. General level of costs remained practically unchanged from April to May. For the second successive month price increases in some foods balanced price decreases in others. During this monthly period an increase in fresh vegetable prices (largely caused by the shift from the old potato season to the new potato season) nullified price decreases in other major foods. Decreases in items other than dairy products and fats and oils, however, were very small.

Compared with last May, costs are down 3 percent. Fresh fruits and vegetables are the one food group in which costs are higher than last May. Despite higher prices for beef and lamb, meat prices in general are below their 1938 level, because of marked reductions from 1938 levels in pork prices.

FRUITS. More apples, cherries, apricots, lemons, peaches and plums than last summer, but fewer grapes, oranges, and pears are in prospect. Apricots and peaches generally are most plentiful in July.

POTATOES. Supplies are expected to increase seasonally in July, and to be smaller than in 1938.

MEATS. Outlook this summer is for more better grade beef and pork, but less lamb than in 1938. During the summer months, lamb and better grade beef supplies usually increase seasonally, while pork supplies decrease.

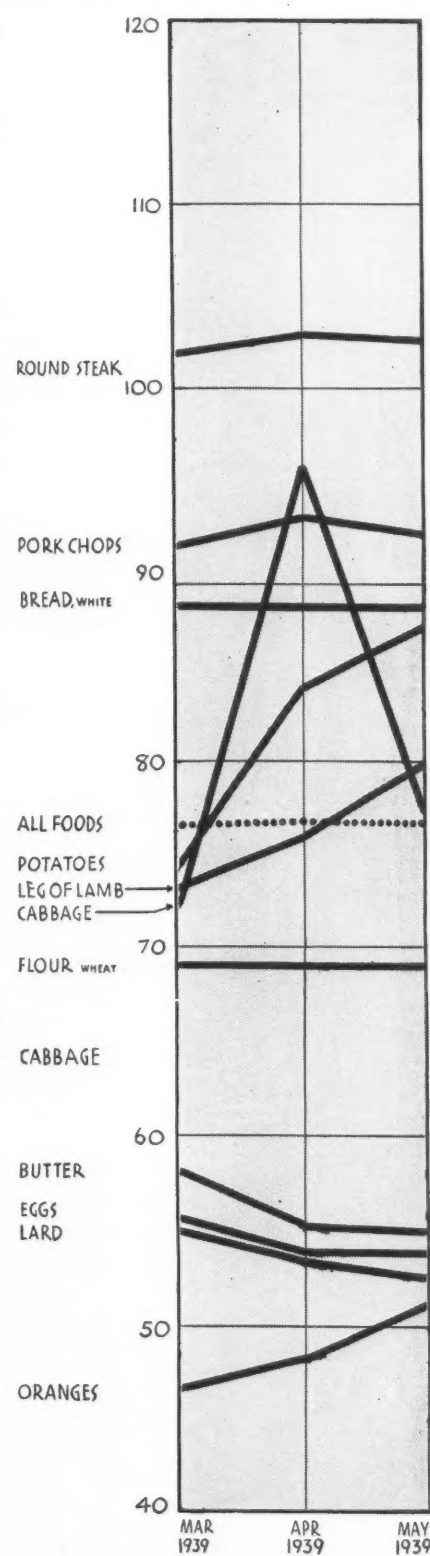
POULTRY. Marketings generally increase monthly during the last half of the year until they hit their peak in December. Increase in supplies over 1938 may not be as large as indicated earlier.

EGGS. Production ordinarily declines during the summer months but it looks as if supplies will continue above their 1938 level.

DAIRY PRODUCTS. Milk production is expected to be higher than in recent years during the summer months, when production starts its seasonal downward swing.

MELONS. Smaller supplies of watermelons and cantaloups than last July are expected. Watermelon supplies ordinarily are heaviest in July; peak cantaloup supplies come in August.

A CLOSE-UP



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